

# Olympia tennis show draws name netters

Three of the top ranked tennis players in the world will compete for \$11,500 in prize money in the first Ontario International Invitational Tennis Classic at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 23 at Detroit's Olympia Stadium.

Entered in the round-robin, one-night event are Bjorn Borg, the 19-year-old Swedish player who is ranked number one in his country and fifth in the world; 37-year-old Rod Laver, number one netter in his native Australia and considered by many to be one of the greatest tennis players of all time; and Mark Cox, 31, the top ranked player in Great Britain and World Team Tennis.

Detroit will be the first stop on what is expected to be a traveling

competition, featuring similar round-robin matches in other cities.

The event also marks the return of Detroit industrialist and sportsman Ozzie Olson to the sports limelight following seven highly successful years as owner of United States Auto Club national championship race cars. During that time, his Ontario Eagles won more races and pole positions, led in more races and on more laps and established more world speed marks and track records than any other car on the circuit.

OLSON WITHDREW FROM racing at the end of the 1974 season immediately after winning the USA-C national championship. Ironically, the same car, under a different sponsorship, won the Indianapolis 500 in May 1975 with Olson's former driver, Bobby Unser, at the wheel. Unser had finished second at Indianapolis in 1974.

Olsen's interest in tennis stems mainly from his son, Chris, a recent graduate of the University of Michigan, where he lettered in tennis. Since graduation, Chris has worked as a tennis pro at the La Costa resort in California with Pancho Segura, Jimmy Connors' instructor.

Explaining the decision to have the Ontario Corporation sponsor the international tennis class, Olsen said, "We haven't lost interest in auto racing. It's just that, since the demise of the Detroit Loves, the life of thousands of tennis fans in the Detroit area rarely get a chance to watch the game's finest men's players in action and this is an opportunity for our company to help correct that situation."

The Virginia Slims women's tennis tournament makes a stop in Detroit each year, featuring top women netters.

In the round-robin competition at

Olympia, Laver, Cox and Borg will play each other in six four-point games. The two players winning the most games will meet in the final match with the winner claiming \$8,500 and the runner-up receiving \$3,000 while third place is worth \$2,000.

THE MATCH WILL mark Borg's first appearance in Detroit. The young netter won top ranking and the Swedish Open in 1973 at age 17. In 1974, Borg captured the Italian and French open championships and, last month, he led Sweden's Davis Cup team to victory over a tough Czechoslovakian team.

The red-headed Laver is the only player in tennis history to complete the Grand Slam twice, winning titles in the four major tournaments at Australia, France, Wimbledon (England) and Forest Hills (U.S.) in the same year.

Cox won fame in 1960 when he upset Pancho Gonzales, marking the first time ever that an amateur player had defeated a professional in open competition. He still retains his number one ranking in Great Britain. After graduation from Cambridge University, Cox won the Eastbourne and Irish Open championships and also captured the Rothman International Trophy.

Tickets priced at \$4 and \$6 are available at Olympia, all Grinnell's stores and the Olympia Travel Bureau and Ticket Service at Maple and Lahar in Birmingham.

Special VIP tickets, entitling holders to attend a cocktail party with the three tennis stars following the matches, are available for \$15 each. A limited number of court-side patron tickets will be sold for \$50 each, including dinner before the matches and the cocktail party.

## Ice arena manager turns pro referee

By PAUL NATKE

What can a man possibly do in his spare time away from his seven-day-a-week job as manager of an ice arena?

He can be a referee in the International Hockey League (IHL) and travel to such exotic places as Fort Wayne, Columbus and Toledo.

Stu Robertson, manager of the Bloomfield Expo Arena for the past three months, says he doesn't mind the refereeing but the traveling bothers him.

"They (IHL) are pro teams so there isn't much trouble refereeing, but I don't like the traveling," he admitted. "If you go to Fort Wayne you have to leave Detroit about two o'clock in the afternoon and you get home about four or five in the morning all for a 2 1/2 hour game."

Robertson admitted that the pay is not very high considering travel time, but he keeps officiating because he loves to skate.

But there's some excitement in being an IHL referee.

"I REMEMBER a fight between Reggie Fleming and Frank Beaton in the playoffs last year between Flint and Saginaw. It was one of the year's better fights and I was reluctant to step between them."

He doesn't mind his never-ending job at the three-year-old Bloomfield Expo because it gives him a chance to skate.

"I skate about an hour a day," Robertson said. "Usually it's on my lunch hour and I just open skate sometimes with a puck, but I don't work out, not in the sense of working out."

But Robertson did work out for 18 years when he was playing hockey. He grew up in St. Clair Shores and started playing hockey in recreation leagues there, but he moved up fast joining the Junior Red Wings in 1961.

three years before he graduated from high school.

"The Junior A League is tough because it has the best competition," Robertson explained. "We were playing almost all Canadian teams."

Robertson was a center and, at 5-8 and 160 pounds, he admits he was bounced around a bit. "Most centers in Junior A are six foot and 180 pounds. In fact it seems like I was always playing against bigger people. I had broken my nose seven times and broken a leg in my hockey career."

AS A JUNIOR Red Wing, however, Robertson played with some locally well-known people such as Jerry Abel, Doug Roberts, Jim Peters and Carl Wetzel. He often talked to Gordie Howe and Alex Delvecchio and "got pretty close to them."

After his stint with the Junior Red Wings, Robertson graduated from high school and played for a local Junior B hockey team — Lee Realty. He was drafted into the Army in 1960 and decided to give up hockey when he returned to civilian life.

"I was gone for two years," he said. "It's hard to get back into shape when you've been away that long."

In September 1974 he began officiating in the IHL after attending a mandatory two-day camp for all officials. The training, Robertson says, is tough.

"You run for a mile in the morning and then do as many push-ups as you can for two minutes," he explained. "Immediately after, you do as many sit-ups as you can, then bounce up and run for another 12 minutes. In the afternoon you run skating drills for several hours."

The Expo features Junior A hockey every Tuesday night and the Junior Red Wings will be there Dec. 30. The Expo is located at 800 Denison, behind the Miracle Mile Shopping Center.

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